



Transformed by Grace to Love One Another, to Serve the City, and to Share Christ

FROM THE RECTOR -

Rev Dr MICHAEL JENSEN

Dear Friends,

St Mark's is a community of Christians that is determined to be transformed by grace. That means, first of all, that we know how much we owe to God in Jesus Christ for the world we enjoy, and for the forgiveness of our sins. It's this message we look to as Christmas approaches - that God has not forgotten his world, but loves it deeply; and that he calls us to live out that love as forgiven people.

This year has been a busy and exciting one at St Mark's. Among other things, we've seen our numbers grow at each of our services. We've had the blessing of seeing a number of people come to Christ this year. We've reached out to our community at the Double Bay Fair. We've seen spiritual growth through our Connect Groups. We've seen the Youth and Children's Ministry continue to flourish. God has been teaching us through the books of Exodus, 1 Corinthians, and about the Fruit of the Spirit.

And very recently, with your kind help, we've welcomed Rev Dr Tim Escott to our staff team as our new Assistant Minister. Tim, who is a fine preacher, will be responsible for the 10am service, for helping us grow as disciples of Christ in all of life, and leading us in growing as a community. He will also be leading our weddings and baptisms ministries, which have such great connection with our local community.

Quarterly Newsletter December 2019

I am really looking forward, as I do every year, to a St Mark's Christmas. We'll be looking to welcome back so many familiar faces, and to remind each other of the greatest news ever - that God from his love has given us his only Son.



Happy Christmas!

Michael

Sunday 15th December
5:30pm Beer and Carols

Sunday 22nd December
7:30pm Festival of Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve
6pm Family Christmas
9pm Jazz Christmas
11pm Choral Communion

Christmas Day
8am Choral Communion
9:45am Family Christmas
11am Family Christmas with Communion

WELCOME TO OUR ASSISTANT MINISTER - TIM ESCOTT

We are delighted to have Rev Dr Tim Escott join our team as Assistant Minister, well supported by his wife Naomi and four children, Lenny (10), Beatrix (8), Jarvis (6), and Morris (nearly 1).

Tim originally studied engineering and worked as an engineer in a start-up biotech company before starting a ministry apprenticeship at Jannali Anglican Church. Following his studies at Moore College he became an Assistant Minister at St David's Anglican Church in Forestville, before heading to the UK to do a PhD in Theology at Durham University.

What do you enjoy about being a Minister?

I love that my vocation involves so much time in God's word: reading it, reflecting on it, teaching it, and sharing the word with others. I also love seeing people grow in their understanding, maturity and love of God: from becoming a Christian, to serving more and more among the body of Christ, to growing in character through trials and suffering. It's a privilege to walk closely alongside people in all of that.

What are your plans for your ministry at St Mark's?

I serve the people at St Mark's, and I do this in close partnership with Michael Jensen, our Rector. The fundamental roles of Christian ministry are to teach the word of God and to pray, in order to help the church grow in maturity in Christ. Michael and I also see our roles as a bit like captain coaches on a footy team. It's not just us doing ministry - everyone has gifts and everyone is involved. The whole church is on the field, building the body of Christ together by speaking the word to each other and to the world, and serving each other in love. Our job is to work alongside you all, helping you. More specifically, I'll have

responsibility for All of Life Discipleship (e.g. overseeing children's, youth, and families' ministries and connect groups) and Growing Community (e.g. overseeing weddings, baptisms, integrating newcomers, and pastoral care).

Please pray that we can balance the competing demands, maintain a vital spiritual life, love our families, and have a faithful and fruitful ministry.

How did you become a Christian?

I've been a Christian now for about 22 years and became a Christian when I was a teenager. I went to my local youth group and heard the gospel of grace - that God wouldn't accept me based on my merit, but on what he had done for me in Jesus Christ. I knew then that if I wanted to be accepted by God, I needed to ask him for forgiveness and turn to follow him.

What are some of the things you have found most encouraging about St. Mark's in the short time you have been here?

My family and I have been so encouraged at St Mark's. Michael has worked so hard to help me find my feet here, and I'm really looking forward to continue to work with him and the rest of the team. We are thankful that the Wardens and Parish Council have been generous in supporting us as we moved from overseas, and that they, along with Wendy Jarratt, have worked hard to make us feel at home on Etham Ave. We have also met an incredible number of very welcoming and friendly people. We are really looking forward to meeting all of you and getting to know everyone better.



ORGAN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT INTERVIEW: PAMINA MILENKOVIC

Pamina Milenkovic commenced her two-year St Mark's Organ Scholarship in August 2019 and the St Mark's community has been enjoying listening to her beautiful playing since this time. Pamina is appreciative of this opportunity and shared: "I hope to move



people. During this scholarship, I've realised that with a great organ you can create drastically different moods and atmospheres. I hope to become great at expressing myself in a way which resonates with others."

Pamina began playing the organ just over two years ago. She plans to undertake a Bachelor in Organ Performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2020.

Pamina sees this scholarship as an apprenticeship. "I have appreciated being mentored by David Drury who has taught me so much in preparation for St Mark's 8:00am choral services. David has taught me how to accompany the choir, effectively lead the congregation and how to choose exciting instrumentation for the audience to enjoy. Since August I have played for the 8:00am services, mostly assisting David, and sometimes playing the whole service. I believe that I will eventually be playing each service on my own." Pamina enjoys practising the organ, typically practising 3 - 4 hours every day as she usually needs to prepare 2 - 3 hymns, most of the communion setting, motets and a postlude. She explained: "The hours of practice usually lie, not in learning the pieces, but creating registrations for them

(organising where stops are pulled in and out during the piece) and then choreographing that, so the stop changes happen seamlessly while playing."

When asked about some of the joys of being an organ player, she shared: "I like how I can be a roaring ocean and then a lullaby within a second. Playing the organ in a church is incredible, as you can hear how music is sacred. Through playing the organ I've been able to find the spirituality in music that I couldn't tap into deeply before."

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY - DOUBLE BAY FAIR STAND

Hosting a stand at this year's Double Bay Fair provided our church with an excellent opportunity to connect with our broader neighbours and invite them to visit

us, especially for our recent Choir Concert and also for our forthcoming Christmas events and services. Our enthusiastic team distributed flyers, sold cakes (in aid of Anglican Aid's Drought Relief Fund), sold Christian books, face painted many excited children and enjoyed answering questions about St Mark's and their own faith. We were grateful to our committed volunteer team who were wonderful ambassadors in passing the baton.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ST MARK'S GARDENERS

We were thrilled when our church gardens were recognised as 'Winner – Best Large Garden 2019' in the Woollahra Garden Awards for the first time! All credit to our dedicated St Mark's Gardeners, who help make our church a welcoming place by displaying beautiful and well maintained gardens.



VISION SUNDAY: PASSING ON THE BATON

St Mark's congregation members shared one combined service followed by lunch on Vision Sunday. The day was a great opportunity to

connect with members from other congregations, while considering our shared vision for St Mark's.



Michael Jensen summarised the vision well, when he said: "We are drawn together by that vision of who God is so that we can pass it on." So how do we share this vision of passing on the baton? Michael encouraged us in three ways. Firstly, to become spiritually fit through prayer, seeking God's wisdom through the Bible and serving in His name. Secondly, to love one another as that is the sign that Jesus is here. Thirdly, to let everyone in our area know that they are welcome at St Mark's. Our Christmas events and services are a perfect time to do this. Will you help pass on the baton?

JOIN WITH US TODAY BY CONTRIBUTING TO ST MARK'S

St Mark's relies on the generosity of our community to fund the ministries within our parish and beyond. We could do so much more with your support. Could you please help us for 2020 with any of these items?

- Kids' Church - \$4,000
- Youth Ministry - \$4,000
- Alpha Course - \$2,000
- Staff Professional Development - \$3,000
- Rough Edges - \$12,000
- Scripture at Double Bay Resources - \$2,000
- Choir - \$6,000
- Creche worker - \$2,500
- MusicTime - \$800
- St Mark's Lecture - \$500

Please consider making a gift to St Mark's. Donations can either be directed towards non-tax-deductible projects (for equipment and materials for ministries such as the children's and youth ministry and choir) or tax-deductible projects (such as church maintenance).

To make a non-tax-deductible gift to St Mark's by direct debit

Name of Westpac Bank account: St Mark's Church

BSB 032 054 Account # 250036

Ref: QG (followed by your name)

If donating by cheque

Payable to St Mark's Church Darling Point

Post - 1 Greenoaks Avenue, Darling Point 2027